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THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION.

Does it belong to the United States or to Chicago?

SPEECH

OF

HON. GEORGE W. RAY,
OF NEW YORK,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

JULY 18, 1892.

The Exposition is both national and international. The honor
of our common country is at stake.

WASHINGTON.

1892.

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SPEECH
OF
HON. GEORGE W. RAY.

Monday, July 18, 1892

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and having under consideration the Senate amendments to the sundry civil appropriation bill—

Mr. RAY said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: As a citizen of and a Representative from the State of New York, I am for this appropriation, although Congress took the Exposition from us and sent it to the comparatively small city of Chicago. [Applause.] I have listened patiently and carefully, but in vain, for the presentation of a single solid and well-founded argument against the proposed appropriation in favor of the World's Columbian Exposition to be held at Chicago in 1893.

It is proposed by this Exposition to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America, and the Government of the United States, through its Congress and Chief Executive, has given the enterprise its assent and approval. The Congress of the United States, by appropriate legislation duly approved, has made this Government a party, if not the chief party, to this undertaking, and so has become responsible, in the eyes of the masses of our people and of the nations of the earth, for its success. [Applause.]

The Congress of the United States assumed to locate and did locate the Exposition and has created a commission which is engaged even now in the erection of appropriate buildings, and the preparation of grounds for the holding of this great international exhibit.

The United States Government by its duly authorized agents, indirectly, if not directly, has extended an invitation to all the civilized nations of the world to take part, and nearly all have responded by the appropriation of large sums of money, aggregating millions of dollars, and the appointment of agents who even now are engaged in active preparations for the proper exhibit of the wealth, power, and progress of their respective nations. It has become, therefore, a practical and important question whether the Government of the United States is now to practically repudiate the enterprise, and thereby disgrace itself in the estimation of the nations of the earth, or by liberal aid to guarantee the success of this gigantic national exhibit. [Ap-

plause.] The following table shows what such nations have done:

The amount thus far appropriated by foreign governments for Exposition purposes approximates \$5,000,000. The following tabular statement presents the data upon which this estimate is based:

Argentine Republic.....	\$100,000	Tasmania	\$10,000
Austria	149,100	Trinidad	15,000
Bolivia	30,700	Guatemala	200,000
Brazil	600,000	Haiti	25,000
Colombia	100,000	Honduras	20,000
Costa Rica	150,000	Japan	630,765
Denmark	67,000	Mexico	50,000
Ecquador	125,000	Dutch Guiana	10,000
France	627,000	Dutch West Indies	5,000
Germany	809,200	Nicaragua	30,000
Greece	60,000	Orange Free State	7,500
Great Britain	300,000	Paraguay	100,000
Barbadoes	6,000	Peru	125,000
Bermuda	3,000	Salvador	12,000
British Guiana	25,000	Cuba	25,000
Canada (preliminary)	100,000	Sweden	53,600
Cape Colony	25,000	Norway	56,280
Ceylon	65,600	British Honduras	7,500
Jamaica	20,000		
New South Wales	150,000	Total	4,932,000
New Zealand	27,500		

The following-named countries have also expressed a determination to participate as governments or through their merchants, but the amount of money to be expended by each is not yet known: Algeria, Belgium, British Columbia, Danish West Indies, Egypt, Erytheria, French Guiana, Hawaii, India, Italy, Madagascar, Maderia, Malta, Mashonaland, Netherlands, Persia, Puerto Rico, Queensland, Russia, Santo Domingo, Siam, South Australia, Spain, Transvaal, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela, Victoria.

These will devote from \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000 to making exhibits.

My colleague from New York [Mr. LITTLE] has shown, by implication at least, the expected resentment of the city of New York at being deprived of the location of the Exposition at that city.

This opposition, however, is more by way of protest against the action of the last Congress in locating the Exposition at Chicago than for the purpose of defeating the proposed legislation.

The location of this Exposition at the comparatively small and unknown city of Chicago [laughter] was certainly ill-advised, but it was done by the Congress of the United States, which seems to have regarded Chicago as the center of the United States, and this Exposition as simply an exhibit of this country.

The Congress ignored the fact that New York City is the center of the civilized world, and that if removed to the vicinity of Harlem Chicago would figure only as a respectable suburb to this great financial and commercial center of the world. It is also true that if located at New York City the Empire State would have contributed so liberally in its aid that appropriations from the United States Government would have been almost superfluous and probably would have been unasked. [Applause.] The fact was ignored that, in effect, this is to be a great international exposition.

But the fact remains that this Exposition is to be held at Chicago, and we are confronted by the further fact that if this Exhibition is to be made a success, if this nation is not to be disgraced, belittled in the estimation of foreign nations, proper aid must be given by this Congress at this session. The gentle-

man from Kentucky [Mr. McCREARY] intimates that at the next session of this Congress, in December next, he will be ready to give his support to an appropriation in aid of this Exposition.

It may not have been in his mind, but we can not resist the suspicion, at least, that such action is prompted to some extent by a desire to keep down appropriations at this session for political effect in the coming November Presidential election. It was suggested by him that after deducting \$100,000,000 for the redemption of United States notes there will be scarcely \$9,000,000 of gold surplus in the Treasury, and he, by implication at least, would picture a deficiency as the result of this appropriation of \$5,000,000 in aid of the Exposition. There is no basis for such an argument, and, in my judgment, the action proposed by the Senate will, if carried out, inure to the benefit of every man, woman, and child in the United States.

We have in the Treasury of the United States not in circulation and not in shape to be put in circulation over \$10,000,000 of subsidiary silver coin so abraded as to be useless except as silver bullion.

It is proposed to coin this in half-dollars with appropriate designs, etc., making them suitable souvenirs of this Exposition, to the amount of \$5,000,000, and with them pay this appropriation in aid of the World's Columbian Exposition.

If this is done there will be put into active circulation within the next twelve months \$5,000,000 of the subsidiary silver coin of this Government. These coins will be eagerly sought after and find ready circulation. If the appropriation is made the buildings for the Exposition will be on a much larger scale than they otherwise would be and employment will be given to thousands of workmen, and every branch of business will be stimulated and strengthened.

All American citizens interested in the growth and development of the United States, and who give the subject careful thought, must regret that a political turn has been given to the discussion of the proposition to extend Government aid to the World's Columbian Exposition. It ought to be discussed, considered, and voted upon in a nonpartisan spirit. The question ought to be will the general growth and prosperity of this nation, of its people, of its industries, be stimulated by this appropriation. [Applause.]

Mr. Chairman, if the Democratic party shall dare to make this a political question, I can but say that it throws itself in the track of the rapidly revolving wheels of progress, and will not stay their advance for a single moment, but will find itself crushed and broken beneath them. [Applause.]

The demagogue may seek to win much notoriety by opposing this measure. He may seek to belittle the enterprise by calling it "a show," but he will only succeed in belittling himself and earning an epitaph which will read, "Here sleeps a moral and mental pigmy." [Applause.]

I doubt not that many members of this House are honestly and sincerely opposed to this measure on grounds which to them seem substantial. We respect these men and their convictions; to them we appeal with argument, and from them we ask that due and candid consideration which all honest and broad-minded men are willing to give.

The Congress of the United States has assumed jurisdiction of this matter, and by its action heretofore has virtually taken charge of the whole enterprise; a commission for which it is responsible has charge of the work. Congress located this Exposition. By authority of Congress the nations of the earth have been invited to take part, and nearly every civilized nation on the face of the globe has accepted the invitation which virtually came from our Government, and each consenting nation has appropriated money to enable it to join in the grand exhibit of the world's progress and prosperity. [Applause.]

This Congress has appointed a committee on this Columbian Exposition, thus recognizing the jurisdiction of Congress in the matter. Our authorized agents have authorized the construction of buildings and works, the cost of which will be far in excess of that contemplated in 1890. Congress can not retreat with honor; it can not repudiate the acts of its agents. The honor of the nation is at stake; the nation has pledged its support, its moral and financial support, to this enterprise to any extent necessary to make it a success, the grandest exposition ever held on the face of the earth.

Those who raise what they claim to regard as constitutional objections seem to forget that the Constitution of the United States is broad and comprehensive enough to enable this nation of ours not only to exist but to prosper and move forward first and foremost in the grand march of nations, and that this constitutional power embraces within its scope each and every step, each and every act and appropriation necessary for the attainment of the desired result. The Constitution not only binds us as a union of States, but it confers upon the legislative branch ample power to provide for the general welfare and progress of all its people, to stimulate trade and internal commerce, and to facilitate the intercourse of our people. We appropriate money for the improvement of our rivers and harbors; by appropriate legislation we regulate and control interstate and foreign commerce, and upon precisely the same principle we may provide and appropriate money for a grand exhibit of the agricultural and industrial growth and progress of the people of these United States. It will promote the growth and prosperity of both manufactures and agriculture, and give encouragement to every farmer and mechanic in the land.

The proposed legislation is neither special nor sectional. It is general in its scope and effect. This Exposition will not only appropriately celebrate one of the grandest events in the world's history, the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, but it will bring the people of all sections of our common country into close intercourse: it will extend and enlarge our acquaintance with each other and strengthen the ties that bind this united and indivisible people. [Applause.] It will present to the gaze of the people of the United States and of the world the remarkable inventive genius of our citizens and demonstrate the beneficent influences of our system of free government. [Applause.] It will awaken the patriotic spirit of our people and give to the young men and women of our country, a broader and more perfect conception of the wealth, power, intelligence, and wonderful resources of this nation. All visitors from foreign lands will be so impressed with our power and resources that

they will carry across the oceans such tales of our invincibility in war as to insure peace to our country, respect for our flag, and protection to our every citizen who travels abroad. [Applause.]

Let it be on a grand scale, and let it be commensurate with our power and resources as a nation. Let it be the act of the nation and not credited to individual enterprise or individual patriotism. But the clause compelling the closing of the gates of the Exposition on Sunday must be retained. [Applause in the galleries.]

The Sabbath day is recognized by the intelligent people of every Christian nation, and its sacred character must not be forgotten or sacrificed to a desire for gain. The laboring men about Chicago need this as a day of rest. With this provision against Sunday opening, I am for the appropriation, without it I am against it. Be not apprehensive that those who visit the Exposition will too liberally patronize the saloons of Chicago on Sunday. Such a statement is an insult to the great masses of our people who will visit the Exposition. I assume that they will find abundant opportunity for recreation and rest in the great parks of that city and in the green fields surrounding her; and I also assume that those who desire will be welcomed to her magnificent churches and places of worship. [Applause.]

When Columbus and his daring crew peered out through the mists of that October morning in 1492 over an unknown sea and caught sight of a new land, they little thought they were opening up a broad highway over which, four hundred years later, there should pass a tide of travel and commerce that should almost baffle calculation. But this has been the result, and now these United States, the Empire of the West, are to celebrate the achievement of those bold voyagers. [Applause.]

Mr. Chairman, I yield the remainder of my time, excepting three minutes, to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HENDERSON]; and those three minutes I propose to yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. BUSHNELL]. The following table shows what has been done by the states:

Appropriations and subscriptions by States and Territories to June 11, 1892.

Arizona.....	\$30,000	Nebraska.....	\$50,000
Arkansas.....	15,000	New Hampshire.....	25,000
California.....	300,000	New Jersey.....	70,000
Colorado.....	100,000	New Mexico.....	25,000
Connecticut.....	50,000	New York.....	300,000
Delaware.....	10,000	North Carolina.....	25,000
Florida (subscription).....	50,000	North Dakota.....	25,000
Idaho.....	20,000	Ohio.....	100,000
Illinois.....	800,000	Pennsylvania.....	300,000
Indiana.....	75,000	Rhode Island.....	25,000
Iowa.....	125,000	Utah.....	20,000
Kansas (subscription).....	30,000	Vermont.....	5,000
Kentucky.....	100,000	Virginia.....	25,000
Maine.....	40,000	Washington.....	100,000
Massachusetts.....	150,000	West Virginia.....	40,000
Maryland.....	60,000	Wisconsin.....	65,000
Michigan.....	100,000	Wyoming.....	30,000
Minnesota.....	50,000	Texas (subscription).....	300,000
Missouri.....	150,000		
Montana.....	50,000		
			3,835,000

State associations have been formed in Louisiana, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Tennessee.



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